



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Animal and
Plant Health
Inspection
Service

FY 2006

WILDLIFE SERVICES—CALIFORNIA

Contact Information: *Craig Coolahan,*
California Wildlife Services State Director
3419-A Arden Way, Sacramento, CA 95825
Phone: (916) 979-2675 Fax: (916) 979-2680
E-mail: craig.c.coolahan@aphis.usda.gov
Web site: www.aphis.usda.gov/wildlife_damage

USDA Resolves Wildlife Conflicts in California

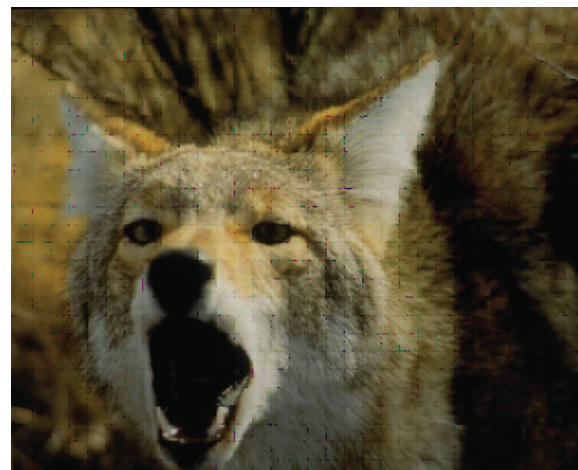
Every day California residents, industries, organizations, and agencies call on California Wildlife Services (WS) for its expertise in protecting agriculture, property, natural resources, and human health and safety from damage or threats posed by wildlife. WS responds with effective, professional, and selective strategies to resolve conflicts between humans and wildlife. California enjoys a diverse mix of urban and suburban settings, agricultural lands, forests, and desert environments. The 37 million residents will have increasing interactions with wildlife as humans encroach on both agricultural property and wildlife habitat. WS specialists, on a daily basis, employ an

integrated pest management (IPM) approach to protect health and safety at airports, provide surveillance and response to outbreaks of wildlife diseases, protect livestock and fruit growers from predators, protect threatened and endangered species, and help resolve wildlife/human interactions in urban environments.

Applying Science & Expertise to Wildlife Challenges

WS offers information, advice, equipment, and materials that enable people to resolve wildlife conflicts on their own. Often, this *technical assistance* is provided over the telephone. WS also provides on-site technical expertise, or *direct assistance*, to manage complex wildlife problems that cannot be safely resolved by others. To support this effort, WS and the National Wildlife Research Center (NWRC) and its field stations conduct *scientific research* across the Nation to develop answers to new problems posed by wildlife and to ensure the program benefits from the best science and technology.

Protecting Health and Safety at Airports—Globally, wildlife strikes have killed more than 194 people and destroyed over 163 aircraft since 1998. Wildlife strikes with aircraft represent an estimated cost to the U.S. civil aviation industry of more than \$550 million annually. California, with nine percent of the Nation's busiest airports, transports more than 177 million passengers (enplanements and deplanements) annually. California's airports are located within the busiest major migratory bird corridor in North America. WS, along with the FAA, is recognized nationally and internationally for its scientific expertise in reducing wildlife hazards to the aviation industry. WS'



National Wildlife Research Center conducts research to understand the nature of wildlife hazards at airports, develop management tools to reduce these hazards, and provide airport personnel with information to control or prevent these hazards. Applying this scientific expertise, the California WS program provided assistance to 24 airports in 2006, including technical assistance, training, and direct operational management. On-site evaluations, as well as comprehensive wildlife hazard assessments were also completed in 2006.

Surveillance of Wildlife Diseases—Wildlife Services has expanded its role in California in monitoring for and preventing the spread of wildlife diseases that may pose threats to humans, other wildlife, domestic pets and livestock. California WS personnel, employed in 39 of the state's 58 counties, collected 4,738 wildlife disease samples in 2006. Disease surveillance activities included: chronic wasting disease, avian influenza, E. coli, rabies, classic swine fever, tularemia, plague, toxoplasmosis, swine influenza, swine brucellosis, pseudorabies, and raccoon roundworm. Cooperating agencies/entities included: California Depart-

Top 5 Major Assistance Activities:

- Protecting public health through monitoring wildlife diseases (Avian Influenza, rabies, E. coli, and others)
- Protecting passengers and aircraft from collisions with wildlife
- Protecting public safety against attacks and threats by mountain lions, black bears, coyotes, and other wildlife
- Protecting sheep, cattle, goats, and poultry from predation
- Protecting federal and state listed threatened and endangered species

Top 5 WS Research Projects of Interest to California:

- Wildlife Disease monitoring (E.coli, Avian Influenza, Plague, West Nile Virus, Rabies, etc.)
- Managing predators through new methods to protect livestock and wildlife
- Defining and reducing wildlife hazards to aviation
- Inducing infertility as a wildlife management tool
- Estimating the costs and benefits of WS' efforts to manage wildlife damage

ments of Health Services and of Fish and Game, USDA/APHIS Veterinary Services and NWRRC, UC Santa Barbara, Centers for Disease Control and Food and Drug Administration. With its unique professional expertise, WS stands poised, now and into the future, to provide valuable assistance the State in any wildlife disease emergency situation/response.

Protecting Livestock from Predators—In addition to the many factors that cause economic hardships for livestock producers, predators like coyotes, bears, and mountain lions cause additional, and sometimes significant, losses by attacking sheep, cattle, and goats. Livestock losses attributed to predators cost U.S. ranchers and producers more than \$71 million annually, according to statistics compiled by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). Approximately, 75 percent of WS' California and other Western States cooperative agreements are with small farmers and ranchers. A NASS survey (2005) of California cattle producers found they lost 6,500 cattle and calves to predators, resulting in more than \$3 million in losses. NASS also conducted a similar study of sheep producers in 2004 and found that their losses were estimated at \$894,000 (11,000 sheep). Research results suggest these figures could be 2 to 3 times higher in the absence of an effective livestock protection program. WS' NWRC is continually working to develop additional methods of managing predators that prey on livestock. The center's research efforts on traps, snares, and chemical control have improved the selectivity of these tools and have provided national and international leadership in this role. Pan-tension devices

Major Cooperators

- County Departments of Agriculture
- California Department of Fish and Game
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- California Department of Parks and Recreation
- California Army National Guard,
- National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)
- Airports

on traps and breakaway snares help ensure that only depredating animals are caught.

Protecting Threatened and Endangered Species—Habitat destruction and urbanization are long-term threats to California's habitats and wildlife, but especially to California's threatened and endangered species. Predators such as feral cats, non-native species like red fox, and native species such as raccoons, coyotes, striped skunks, and raptors threaten these species. During the past decade, the California WS program participated in numerous projects to protect threatened and endangered species. In fiscal year 2006, WS conducted 29 projects to protect California threatened and endangered species, some of which are the red-legged frog, the desert tortoise, the purple amole flower, and the Sierra Nevada bighorn sheep. In nearly all cases, the projects resulted in the threatened or endangered species populations being maintained or increased.

Addressing Wildlife Damage to Property in Urban Areas—Numerous species of wild animals inhabit cities and suburbs throughout California. Striped skunks, opossums, and raccoons commonly forage in backyards and seek shelter under porches and buildings or in attics, causing substantial damage to the structures. In addition, these animals may leave behind offensive odors that can render the structure temporarily uninhabitable. WS wildlife specialists conducted 9,702 visits to homes and other locations to investigate and resolve wildlife damage to property in 2006.

Looking to the Future

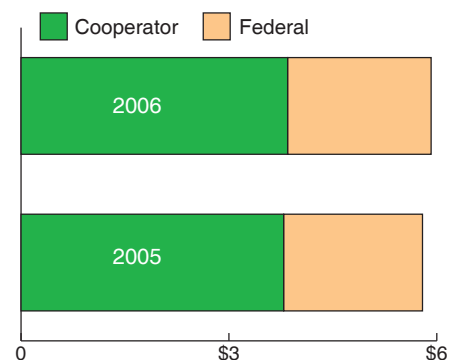
In California, public safety has become a growing concern for managers and public health officials. This is particularly true at airports. Increased travel through California's airports, coupled with a growth in the population of many bird species, has created a greater need for airport managers to

manage threats posed by wildlife. A second issue related to public safety involves the increased need to protect people from large predators such as coyotes, black bears, and mountain lions. In fiscal year 2006, WS personnel responded to 9,255 requests for assistance where public health and safety were being threatened by wildlife. In addition, WS will continue to work with our cooperators, Universities, and other Federal and State agencies throughout California, to conduct surveillance for wildlife borne diseases that negatively impact humans, livestock, and other wildlife.

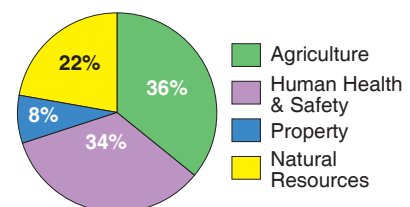
California Wildlife Services Funding

In addition to receiving federally allocated funds, WS also receives money from cooperators; such as producers; private individuals; businesses; and other Federal, State, and local government agencies who have a vested interest in the program. In most cases, these cooperators need help to resolve Wildlife damage problems or they play a role in wildlife damage management.

Total Funding (Millions)



Resources Protected % of Total Funds



USDA is an equal employment provider and employer.